



October 2015



## Great Teachers

Later this month, the Department will have the privilege of honoring the 2015-16 Missouri Teacher of the Year and five other finalists at an awards banquet in Jefferson City. This year's recipient, Linda Glasgow, is a third-grade teacher at John Nowlin Elementary in Blue Springs. She is in her 30th year of teaching and uses her extraordinary talents every day to shape the lives and future of young children. The unfortunate reality is not every student in the state gets the opportunity to have a teacher like Ms. Glasgow. Missouri is working hard to solve the issue.

Last month, the state released its Educator Equity Plan, a comprehensive study designed to address teacher equity in our schools. The collaborative effort between the Department, school leaders and education organizations focuses on five key areas: preparing educators, identifying critical shortages, attracting candidates, developing current teachers and supporting principals and school leaders. The plan takes an in-depth look at what strategies and tactics we must follow in order for ALL Missouri children to have access to effective educators. If you have not read the plan, I urge you to do so.

Missouri has thousands of excellent educators. There should not be a correlation between where a student lives and the effectiveness of his or her teacher. It should not matter if a district has 300 students or 20,000 students. We must work together to implement strategies designed to ensure there is an effective educator in EVERY classroom.

There is no better job in the world than that of a classroom teacher. In her letter to the selection committee Ms. Glasgow stated, "If you look into the heart of a teacher, you'll see a depth of love and caring matched only by a parent's love for his or her child."

Let's work together to ensure all of Missouri's children have the opportunity to learn from effective educators.

Margie Vandeven



*Commissioner Vandeven visits Barbara Blanchard Elementary in Cape Girardeau, a Blue Ribbon School.*